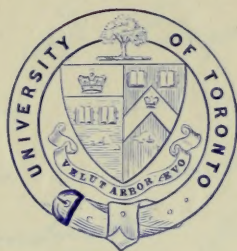




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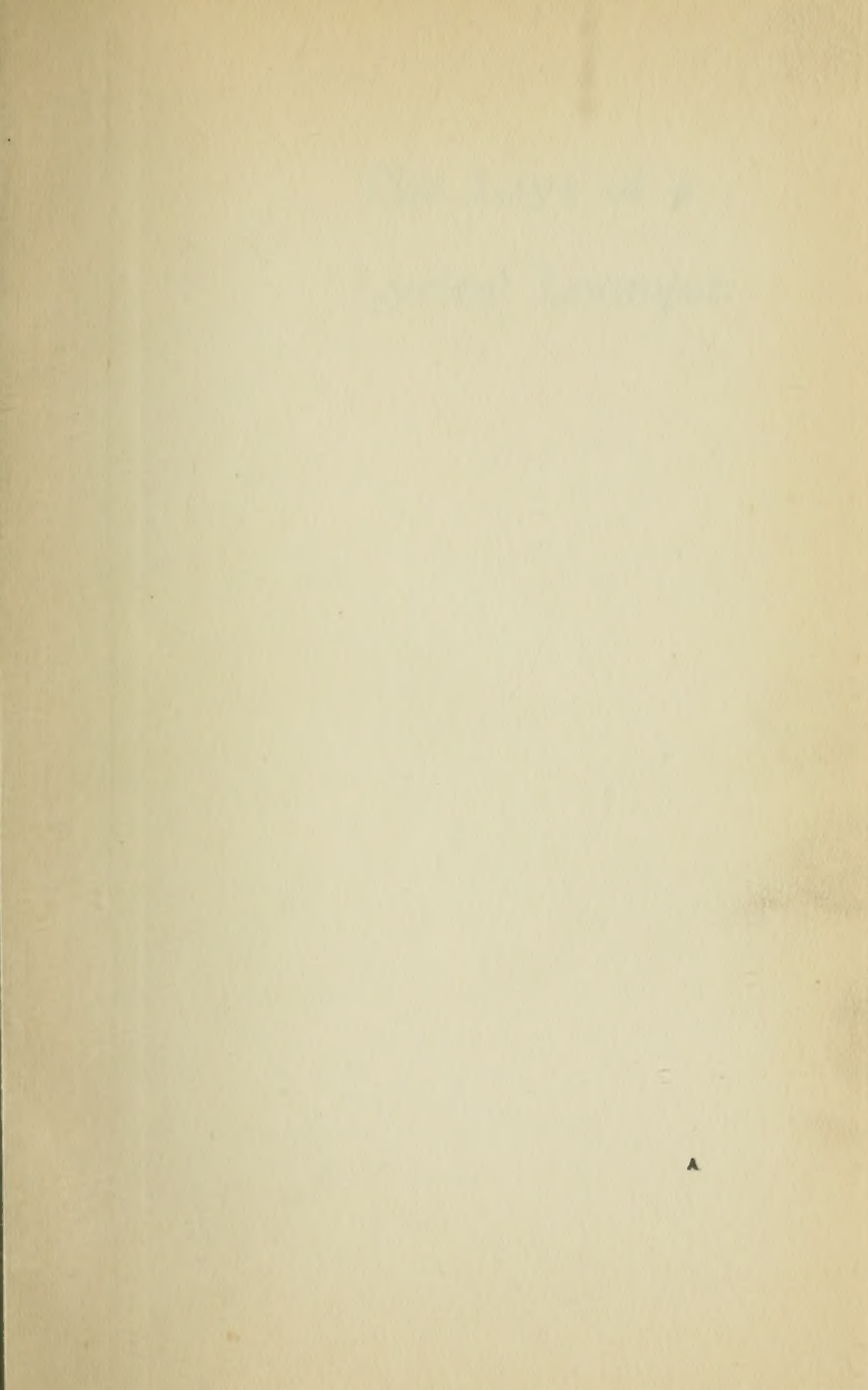
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Lyrical Lounger.



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THE LAYS OF A LYRICAL LOUNGER.

BY
E. W. MORRISON.

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18.4.41

LONDON:
THE KINGSHURST PUBLISHING CO., LTD.,
12 REGENT STREET, S.W.
1910.

THE majority of these "Lays" have not yet appeared in print. To those Editors, by whose kind permission certain of them are reproduced, I here beg to offer my best acknowledgments.

I must also take this opportunity of thanking my friend, Mr. Wallace L. Crowdy, for very kindly seeing the book through the press for me.

E. W. M.

March, 1910.

TO MRS. SOPHAY A. WEBB
(Of Torquay).

At the last Easter Ball
You would fain have me write
"A book that you all
Should read with delight!"—
The Book I invite
You to place on your shelf.
I leave the Delight
To look after itself.

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THE LAYS.

THE FAIRY VISIT.

She comes but once a year
With eyes that laugh like May,
With lips that twitch so near
And yet so far away,
With dear, deaf ears that say,
"We are too small to hear
The compliments you pay!"—
She comes but once a year.

A week ago to-day
That cherished Once was here.
But now—ah, wellaway!—
The after-dumps appear.
Now one-and-fifty drear
Weeks claim me for their prey.
I grew too fond, I fear,
A week ago to-day!

THE DESPOT.

She rustles past in distant style,
With careless glance, and formal smile,
Scarce granting me a bow the while—
And yet I love her!

She seems to all my homage blind.
My proffered services I find
Unhesitatingly declined—
And yet I love her!

She snubs me on the slightest plea.
It fills her soul with fervent glee
To thoroughly discomfit me—
And yet I love her!

She mocks me for a crazed young fool,
She holds me up to ridicule—
The biggest dunce in Cupid's school—
And yet I love her!

For though she plays the tyrant's part,
And plays it with consummate art,
Methinks deep down within her heart
She really loves me!

WHEN PHYLLIS LAUGHS.

When Phyllis laughs, Care flies away
Before her dancing eyes of grey.

Each silvery echo sweeter seems
Than music in a poet's dreams
Asleep beside a brook in May.

The breezes tease her lips in play.
They steal her joy. "See, see," they say,
"With what a spoil our warm breath teems,
When Phyllis laughs!"

Dan Cupid in his crafty way
To snare her heart makes sly essay,
But prematurely fails. She gleams
As free as are the sun's own beams.
And every little child grows gay,
When Phyllis laughs!

WHEN SYLVIA SMILES.

When Sylvia smiles men pause and sigh.
They look on her, and wonder why
 Warm, tender thoughts come crowding fast
 At every glance her soft eyes cast
Like gleams of sunshine from on high.

Her presence seems to purify
The very air. Base passions die.
 And churlish natures melt at last,
 When Sylvia smiles.

Dear, dear to all she passes by
Unwooded! Beneath the Transvaal sky,
 Beneath a lone grave, now o'er-grassed,
 Her heart lies buried in the past.—
Love lives no longer in her eye,
 When Sylvia smiles.

AN EPIGRAM.

The best of wives
 May prove a flirt.
But still one strives
 Not to be pert,
 Lest snubs, that hurt
One's heart like knives,
 May prove a flirt
The best of wives!

TO A FRISKY STEED ON A FROSTY MORNING.

You have bucked, and ducked, and danced,
You have lunged, and plunged, and pranced,
 You have sent me ricochetting where the
 ice is!
So I hand the groom the reins,
And, "eternized" for your pains,
 I leave you to your own d— vices!

RUTH IN A REVERIE.

Her profile reposes,
And pursed are her lips.
In softest of dozes
Her profile reposes.
The tip of her nose is
The archest of tips!
Her profile reposes,
And pursed are her lips.

WHO?

Last time I danced in Elysium,
Who was it swayed in my arms?
Who rapt my eyes, fit to dizzy 'em,
Last time I danced in Elysium?
Who laughed, and silvered the busy hum?
Who blushed, and rubied her charms?
Last time I danced in Elysium,
Who was it swayed in my arms?

THE DREAM.

I dreamt about Lulu last night,
But ask me the dream, and I'm done.
No doubt 'twas a "dream of delight"!
(I dreamt about LULU last night!)
No doubt she looked sunnily bright.
No doubt she bewitched me—for fun!
I dreamt about Lulu last night,
But ask me the dream, and I'm done.

AN APPEAL.

Veronica, look in my eyes,
And charm all my worries away!
You look at my ear in surprise.
Veronica, look *in my eyes*!
That ear, which so leisurely dries,
Was bit by your poodle in play!
Veronica, look in my eyes,
And charm all my worries away!

THE GREYBEARD'S YARN.

When I was a dapper,
Pert whipper-snapper,
A dear little "flapper"

One morning in June
I spied my way coming,
All sweet graces summing
Up in her, and humming
A maidenly tune.

Then I, like the dapper,
Pert whipper-snapper
I was, tried to "cap" her,

But oh! she was tart!
She studied a fish-shop,
Serene as a bishop,
Which made a mad wish hop
Into my heart.

Too brisk to be beaten
By sour 'un or sweet 'un,
The old fire of Eton

Cried, "Stick to your quest!"
I stuck to it—rather—
Found plump in my path her
Impossible father—
And he did the rest!

A BALLAD OF THE SEA.

*'Twas a crone with wild eyes staring,
And she gazed far out to sea.
Half-gleeful, half-despairing
Her mad mood seemed to be.
The sea-gulls screamed around her,
And loud the tempest rang.
The foam-flakes leapt, and crowned her,
But she laughed back, and sang:*

“O Sea, O Sea, to thy tyrant swell
Have I daughter been and slave.
O Sea, O Sea, I have served thee well—
I have given thee all I have!
On thy rolling billows was I born,
And the children born of me
Are thine, not mine, for—heart forlorn!—
I have given them all to thee!

I lisped with thy salt breath on my cheek,
And I blushed a seaman's bride.
My first-born left me thy breast to seek
And serve by his father's side.
But thou wast jealous and cruel and wroth,
And a widow torture-torn
Thou leftst me—yea, thou tookst them
both!—
With three poor babes to mourn.

The first was ruddy with curly hair,
The second was dark as night,
The third was a blue-eyed maid as fair
As ever looked on the light.
And the first two, when to manhood grown,
Went forth on their fortunes' quest,
But the ship that bore them—God, God, alone,
He knows where her timbers rest.

Yet the blue-eyed maid I loved the best,
For she had her father's smile.
And her father's heart lived in her breast
To gladden my grief awhile.
But there came a wild day when, as now,
Thy billows, Sea, did roar,
And calmed not till—no man knew how—
They bore her corpse ashore.

And ever since, when the crested shocks
Like thunder-crashes fall,
I wander down to these lone, bleak rocks,
And hear the Tempest call——"
The shrunken being checked her song,
And fearfully looked behind.
But still the Voice, that had called so long,
Came moaning down the wind.

*"It is calling, calling, calling,
And its echoes grow more loud.
And the night is falling, falling,
To be my dying shroud.
O God, 'tis thine own warning!"—
She cried, nor words spake more.
But a woman's corpse next morning
Came floating to the shore.*

TO MY MOTHER.

A boy's—or a man's—
Best friend is his mother.
Her whole life she fans
A boy's—or a man's—
Parched soul, from it bans
The Drought that would smother.
A boy's—or a man's—
Best friend is his mother.

THE THREE ESSENTIALS.

Verse, Music, and Flowers
Should a woman adore.
The essence, that dowers
Verse, Music, and Flowers,
Should mellow her powers,
Should sweeten her core.
Verse, Music, and Flowers
Should a woman adore.

PHŒBE.

I stand securely parted
From Phœbe and her smile,
And waxing valiant-hearted
My poor weak self beguile.
"It's too much! I'll renounce her!
She's done me her last wrong!
The minx! I'd like to trounce her!"—
Then Phœbe sweeps along.

Blithe as the morn is Phœbe,
And sunshine lights her way.
What else but blithe could she be
Whose eyes dance all the day?
Her carol sounds her coming,
And like an answering gong
Love sets my heart a-drumming,
When Phœbe sweeps along!

Phœbe is sadly human.
I know her faults full well.
In her like every woman
A tyrant's whimsies dwell.
Then let her mock my ardour!
Can't my will, too, be strong?
And yet I love the harder,
When Phœbe sweeps along!

O Phœbe, Phœbe, Phœbe,
With the eyes that ever glow,
With the damask cheek of Hebe,
And the cold soul of the snow—
She laughs to hear me raving,
And bids me change my song!
But *how* can I stop craving
When Phœbe sweeps along?

“A WOMAN’S FACE WITH NATURE’S OWN
HAND PAINTED.”

Lift, lift your veil, sweet maid, demure.
For charity no more obscure
The tender sister-tints that vie
Within your cheek so tremblingly—
The native rose and lily pure.

For why—ah, why?—should *you* abjure
The wind’s caresses, wet or dry?
Your red and white are quite secure!—
Lift, lift your veil!

There! Now your clear free gaze would cure
The tears of centuries—would lure
Soft mercy from a Jephthah’s eye—
Would lull a Lazar’s misery!
Sweet maiden, let this boon endure.—
Lift, lift your veil!

A CYNICISM.

She was his goddess, his idol,
He was her puppet, her toy
One day, as colt casts the bridle,
Chafing she cast off the boy.
He thought himself broken-hearted.
She showed complacent regret.
Briefly, they shook hands, and parted—
Twenty years after they met.

He was a Peer—and unmarried!
One such as women adore,
One for whom Fortune had tarried,
Being a man to the core.
She was a widow—and altered!
Trouble had done its work well.
Now at his voice her tongue faltered,
Now at his gaze her eyes fell.

She felt his power, and he knew it,
Knew it, and laughed in his pride:
Cast at her love to pursue it,
Seeking revenge, not a bride:
Triumphed, and, savagely human,
Spurned what he won under foot.
She was a Fool—and a Woman!
He was a Man—and a Brute!

A POET'S PRAYER.

From Cynics, Materialists,
And anti-Imperialists,
Good Lord deliver us!

"Practical" people—
Quick! A high steeple!
Let the bump shiver us!

Bored folk, whose languor, whose
Drawl makes our anger ooze,
Throw to the kangaroos—
Make 'em carnivorous!

"A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT."

I loathe the creed of King-and-Aristocracy.
I'd like to see Great Britain a Democracy.
I'd like—and that's a heart-felt compliment—
To see King Edward the first President!

AN 'XMAS GREETING.

Like the sun on the snow
Be your Christmas—but brighter!
Gleam your joy, as you go,
Like the sun on the snow!
Let your heart spare a glow
Of good-will for the writer!
Like the sun on the snow
Be your Christmas—but brighter!

A SECOND 'XMAS GREETING.

At Christmastide the postman slings
A wealth of worries through our door,
Bills, touting circulars, galore,
Subscription-lists, and other things.

We learn to shudder when he rings,
And execrate him more and more
At Christmastide!

But what cares he? He only brings
A worse infliction than before—
A friendly ode which that arch-bore,
The would-be-poet, fondly sings
At Christmastide!

A THIRD 'XMAS GREETING.

(Tied to a Dog's Collar).

*Go, little dog, and softly say
To your dear mistress:*

“Christmas Day
Was meant for shedding grace and balm
On contrite hearts!”—Such meek salaam
I bring from one who never yet
Could learn your sweet face to forget,
From one who erred through love's excess,
But still dreams of forgiveness,
And likes to think you sometimes say
“God bless him!” still—on Christmas Day!
*So go, and, if good luck pursue,
Dear little dog, I'll worship you!*

A WALTZ WITH MAUD.

“A Waltz with Maud!” What witchery
Lies in the words! What bubbling glee
Distils responsive through my brain,
Till every nerve-cell thrills again,
And all is lost in ecstasy!

The Common Herd—how wistfully
They gaze on her, who scorns their plea!
But I—I never ask in vain

A Waltz with Maud!

Terpsichore, Terpsichore,
Thou Queen of Muses, promise me
Throughout my life, come shine or rain,
One joy of joys may still remain,
One foretaste of Eternity—

A Waltz with Maud!

“ AH, WELL! ”

Ah, well! We had to quarrel,
Since Fate ordained it so!
To think that such a moral—
“ Ah, well! We had to quarrel! ”—
Should turn our hearts to coral,
Our loves to frozen snow!—
Ah, well! We *had* to quarrel,
Since Fate ordained it so!

A LEGEND OF EDEN.

When Adam one day, growing flighty—
alas!—

Of kisses was fain to bereave Eve,
He thought himself sly as a snake in the
grass,

But Adam was not on the *qui vive*.

For when he caught hold of her—down
went her head .

And she butted his nose to his sorrow.

“ If you want me to stop, you must promise,”
she said,

“ To buy me a new hat to-morrow! ”

CUPID FRUSTRATED.

The Boy.

She's the plague of my life,
Un-get-at-able Gertie!
She *won't* be my wife!
She's the plague of my life!
And the sum of our strife
Is "You wait till you're thirty!"
She's the plague of my life,
Un-get-at-able Gertie!

The Widow.

He's the last thing in freaks,
Irresponsible Walter!
I've refused him for weeks.
He's the last thing in freaks.
If he *got* what he seeks,
How his ardour would alter!
He's the last thing in freaks,
Irresponsible Walter!

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

On a headland high,
'Neath an azure sky,
 With her face to the drowsy tide,
Sat a maiden fair
In the warm June air,
 And a youth sat by her side.

This maiden fair
Had nut-brown hair,
 And eyes that were browner still,
And a voice as sweet
As the gentle beat
 From the rippling woodland rill.

A wayward dear,
As I sadly fear,
 She was mocking the youth in jest.
For maids *will* play
In this tiresome way
 With those whom their hearts love best!

The youth in vain
Ransacked his brain
 For some epigram apt and terse.
Then sat and glared
Till the sweet tease dared
 To twit him for writing verse.

Then a sudden light
Shone clear and bright
In his wickedly-twinkling eye,
Though with ready smile
He cloaked the guile
That deep in his heart did lie.

"Oh, yes," quoth he
Quite carelessly,
"I dabble in verse at times.
I can show you now—
If my cuffs allow—
A few of my home-made rhymes!"

He sampled his cuff
With bearing bluff,
Then pencilled some straggling signs.
"Please read it out."
She turned about,
And read these doggerel lines:

"O, never be wrath-laden,
But only tell me this—
Is it wrong to kiss a maiden
Whose lips were made to kiss?"

Aye, the tide had turned.
How the girl's cheek burned!
Not of this had she dreamt, I trow.
When she spoke at last,
'Twas with eyes downcast,
And the answer she breathed was "No!"

THE LARK'S LESSON.

I saw a Lark upon a cloudy day

 Outlined against a precious patch of blue,
That like a soaring minstrel seemed to say,
 " O lift your hearts, dull men, to Heaven, too !

 O lift them up with me, and carol through
The clouds that now forbid you to be gay.

 O lift them up with me, and learn to woo
The hidden sun to drive the clouds away ! "
So sang the lark, methought. And as I lay

 Upon the grass, the better to pursue
My melancholy musings, " Thanks for aye ! "
I cried upspringing, " Lark, thy lore is true.

Henceforth, whatever clouds the fates may
 bring,

Within the blue my heart shall soar and sing ! "

THE BACKWARD LOVER.

If he'd only say three little words to me,
If he'd only stop shuffling his feet,
And praising the spring and the birds to me,
And saying *my sister* is sweet—
Cissy, a six-year-old lisper!
If but "I love you!" he'd whisper!
If he'd only say three little words!

If he'd only play two little tricks on me
(Played in turn with his arms and his lips!)
Catch hold of me, kiss me, yes, fix on me
The fondest of kisses and grips—
When I protested, to tease me,
Merely the more kiss and squeeze me!—
If he'd only play two little tricks!

If he'd only give one little gift to me,
Only act like a sensible thing,
Begin by expounding his drift to me,
And end with the "size of the ring"—
Would not the gift he was giving
Make me the gayest girl living?—
If he'd only give one little gift!

THE NEW COMPLAINT OF VENUS

(With no apologies to Chaucer).

Fair Venus sits a-moaning,
A-whimpering, a-groaning,
And with her tearful droning
The whole of Ida rings.

"Why will they? Why will they?
My pretty pets, why will they?
O, Nature, say why will they
Do such appalling things?

Alack the days of Homer,
When Odysseus, the Roamer,
Without the least misnomer

Might speak of maids as 'flowers!' *

Those days have gone for ever.
Call modern maids that? Never!
No, no! They're far too clever
In this fast age of ours!

The "flowers" now sprawl at hockey.
They call their friends 'Old Cocky.'
They swear like any jockey
Or trooper in the land.

They read the Pink One's pages,
And roar, like knowing sages,
O'er jokes which, at their ages,
They shouldn't understand!

* See the reference to *Nausicaa* in the *Sixth Book of the Odyssey*.

They paint and powder nightly.
They speak of parsons lightly.
They chat in manner sprightly
 About the last divorce.
They like a 'good old gamble,'
And with this choice preamble
To Epsom off they ramble—
 And back the winning horse!

E'en matrons fat and florid
Now smoke, which I call horrid!
They'll go to regions torrid,
 If they don't mend their ways!
And as for suffragitis,
Give me appendicitis,
Croup, lock-jaw, and neuritis,
 Before I catch that craze!

But, see, the light is waning.
And ugh! It's started raining"——
Fair Venus leaves her plaining,
 And flies to realms on high.
But still "Alack! Why will they?"
The woods cry, and "Why will they?"
The streams call, and "Why *will* they?"
 Is Echo's sole reply!

THE IDEAL WOMAN.

Her heart should be pure,
Her love should be sure.

Her gaze should be clear,
Her greeting sincere :

Her smiles soft and sweet,
Her frowns few and fleet.

Her features refined
Should mirror her mind :

Her bearing serene
Proclaim her a queen.

To imitate man
Is a crime she would ban.

So good and so fair
She would rule everywhere !

THE PERFECT HUSBAND.

His will should be strong,
His conscience be tender,
Who charms Woman long.

To guide, sway, and bend her—
If need be, amend her!—
His will should be strong.

His conscience be tender
The love-dues to render
To her that belong.

His will should be strong
To shield her from wrong,
His conscience be tender
From tears to defend her!

A BALLAD OF YOUTH.

It is good to live when the heart is young,
And the brows are clear, and the steps are
light,
And a jest spins trippingly off the tongue,
And existence carols from morn till night,
And the will turns wayward for sheer delight,
And the wits drop worry through memory's
sieve,
And the earth is fair, and the dawn is bright—
Heaven of Youth! It is good to live!

It is good to live when the spirit burns
With the young spring's flame, with the sweet
spring's fire,
When the soul like a melody soars and yearns
With hope for a harp and love for a lyre,
And the lungs are choristers loath to tire,
And the pulse is a panting fugitive,
And the nerves are steel, and the sinews
wire—
Heaven of Youth! It is good to live!

It is good to live when the heart is one
With the wave's sweet laugh, when the far
sea-line
Sends a smile of silver back to the sun
That steals at morn from the clouds' confine.

When the swimmer's blood brims rich like
wine,
And the sea gives grace such as gods might give,
And the thoughts drip joy as the curls drip
brine—

Heaven of Youth! It is good to live!

It is good to live when the murmur swells,
And the music swings, and the dancers sway,
And the soul is the gladdest of golden bells
Tolling for Care to take holiday.

When soft eyes, purer than dews of May
And proud of their dear prerogative,
Look in their lover's, and laugh away—
Heaven of Youth! It is good to live!

It is good to live when December fain
Would send the old year rollicking home,
And Christmas, host in his own domain,
Bids all be welcome under his dome,
And kind words wander and warm thoughts
roam,
And friends foregather and foes forgive,
And Love laps Life as the snow laps loam—
Heaven of Youth! It is good to live!

L'ENVOY.

It is good to live when the smiles of Joy
Make Grief's great tears look diminutive.
When the heart of a man is the heart of a boy—
Heaven of Youth! It is good to live!

TIME'S CHOICE.

I was sitting one night by the fireside in the
gleam of the sinking flame,
And the Spirit of Sleep with my eyelids was
playing his dreamy game.

Slowly the Spirit triumphed till back in the
chair I lay.

The book from my hand dropped gently, and
my thoughts wandered far away.

'Twas an evening in golden summer—or so it
seemed to my heart—

And before me an aged Reaper was deftly
plying his art.

He wielded his scythe with a keenness living
eyes never saw till then.

And I gazed on the steel with a shudder, for
the harvest it reaped was men.

The Reaper was worn and wrinkled, his form
was nigh bent in twain,

Yet his eye shone with youthful lustre, and he
reaped without wrench or strain.

His forelock and beard were hoary as the
blustering winter's rime—

Then forthwith the truth flashed on me, and
I knew him for Father Time.

I watched him in silent wonder as his pitiless
task he plied.

I watched his blade gleam in the sunshine, as it
piled the swaths side by side.

Then slowly my fear departed, and bolder my
heart became,

Till I opened my lips in my daring, and called
on the Reaper by name.

Time heard, but his head he raised not, nor
aught from his work stopped he.

But softly he called, "Nay, stranger, 'tis thou
who must come to me.

My blade, as a tireless hunter, aye follows an
endless chase.

To cease from my toil I may not—Time's
task ever grows apace!"

Then nearer I drew to the Reaper, and before
him I took my stand.

"Stern Father," I quoth, "all nations have
cowered 'neath thine aged hand.

Yet of all that thy scythe hath conquered, full
countless in every coast,

Which to thy heart was nearest? Which didst
thou love the most?"

Time toiled at his work in silence, whilst a man
might count ten or more.

He eyed the grim pile beside him, he glanced
at the fields before.

Then the look of a brooding maiden came
into those stern old eyes.

And thus did I hear the judgment of the
Toiler who never dies.

“Nursling of Ganges’ fountains, dweller by
Nilus’ bank,

Grecian, and Moor, and Roman, Teuton, and
Dane, and Frank,

Norseman, and steel-souled Dutchman, hero
of courtly Spain—

Each hath an honoured corner in Memory’s
close-barred fane.

But the noblest of all earth’s offspring is a
fondling of ocean’s foam.

’Midst the swirl of the surging waters God
wrought him his stately home.

With the breath of the surf in his nostrils He
set him to live his span

In the cradle Himself had chosen, remote
from the gaze of man.

Yea, fairest of lands is England, and dearest"—
Time's form grew dim.
And I smiled as I rose from my slumber at my
poor little Jingo whim.
Yet methought if some seer might read us,
as men read a runic rhyme,
The tale of the marching ages—would we
quarrel with Father Time?

MY FATHER.

He may or may not stand alone.
Somewhere there may be such another.—
He is of men that I have known
The one man meet to match my mother!

THREE QUOTATIONS AND A RONDEAU.*

"God's Englishmen."—*Milton*

"If there be a God, I think that what He would like me to do is . . . to promote the unity and extend the influence of the English-speaking race."—*Cecil Rhodes*.

"Over all that great area there seemed to brood, not less powerful in death than in life, the master-spirit of Cecil Rhodes."—*Lord Curzon*.

God's Englishman.

"God's Englishman"! That name alone
Seems with the right, triumphant tone
To sound forth his great soul who trod
The path of Empire and of God—
The only pathway to him known.

He held the British race God's own,
Ordained to rule through every zone.

And Little Britons thought him odd!—
"God's Englishman"!

Mayhap he was. Let this atone:
His mighty spirit, mightier grown,
Shall brood o'er every British clod,
Until he rises from the sod,
And stands acclaimed before God's throne
"God's Englishman"!

* *Reprinted from the Standard of Empire.*

ONE QUOTATION AND A ROUNDEL.

("Your people do not know their greatness;
they possess a fifth of the world, and do not
know that it is slipping from them!"—
Cecil Rhodes).

Sleep soundly, Rhodes, upon the mountain's
brow.

The winds that sing their melancholy odes
Over thy lonely grave are saying now,
"Sleep soundly, Rhodes!"

Sleep, and in death forget the spur that goads
Great hearts to action. In thy life, I trow,
Thy shoulders bore a Nation-Maker's loads.

Thy life-work now is over. Sleep!—But how—
How when the Star of Destiny forebodes
Dwindling of England's greatness—how canst
thou

Sleep soundly, Rhodes?

THE HERO.

No chant I sing
To cricketing king,
Or champion "Queen's Club" trotter;
I merely raise
A hymn of praise
To the Absolute All-Round Rotter!

To the worthy soul,
Whose life's one goal
Is to solve Fame's eerie riddle,
And from sport to sport
Creeps on—a sort
Of glorified Thirteenth Fiddle!

Who would die in peace,
If before decease
He might shine in the world of "Soccer,"
But forgets, alas!
That his "Grand Stand pass"
Is scarcely according to Cocker!

Who dreams by night
Of the wild delight
Of stroking "The Eight" to glory,
But in waking hours
Expend his powers
On the bank—*populari more!*

Who bowls "leg-breaks"
That writhe like snakes,
 With the keenness of one in a million,
But whose wiles won't act
For the simple fact
 That his "long fields" aren't in the
 pavilion!

Whose original style
In the "quarter-mile"
 Is a perfect revelation,
And who lacks, indeed,
But wind and speed
 To gain quite a reputation!

Who in sheer despair
Seeks to drown his care
 In the culture of self-protection,
And of darkened eyes
Gets—for shade and size—
 A truly unique collection!

Who runs Life's race
With a smiling face,
 And the heart of an old-time Viking,
And, though Fame be shy,
Doth live and die
 A man of the World's own liking!

“CONGRATULATIONS!”

(An Old Bachelor *loquitur*.)

My dear, my dear, I heard you say,
Not three weeks gone from yesterday,
As tripping past my gate you went,
That you “detested sentiment!”

My dear, my dear, I watched you go,
And mused how marvellously slow
Your steps seemed, when with Captain Jack
You came at dusk meandering back!

My dear, my dear, observant I
Some ten days later heard you sigh
Three heavy times without a pause,
Three heavy times without a cause!

My dear, my dear, I grew quite gay
When first I heard the news to-day.
I chuckled as old fogeys do,
And swore I “knew a thing or two!”

NOTHING TO DO.

A Roundel.

Nothing to do and a lifetime to do it in!

What further heaven on earth could accrue?
In the phrase lies Life's ideal, as I view it—in
"Nothing to do"!

No fame to sigh for, no goal to pursue!

Life one long laze with no future to rue it in!
Time a dream-medley of Swinburne and You!

Nothing but love and a love-song to woo it in!

Nothing but ballads and twin eyes of blue!—
Only gold sand for the hours to ^{write} "fruit" in!—
Nothing to do!

THE TRIOLET.

A Triolet flows
Like a rippling brook.
With gladness that grows
A Triolet flows :
With musical close
It glides home to its nook.
A Triolet flows
Like a rippling brook.

Like a Star of the Night
Should a Triolet be :
A brave, little mite,
Like a Star of the Night.
It should glow with delight,
And twinkle with glee.
Like a Star of the Night
Should a Triolet be.

THE GARDEN OF REMORSE.

A maiden sat in a Garden
Out of the glad sun's range,
Sighing that souls should harden,
Weeping that hearts should change.
As a rose with the west wind duels,
Her lips with their trembling strove.
And her eyes were like wan, wet jewels
Wrung from Grief's treasure-trove.

Outside the sunless garden
Woosers with wistful face
Peeped with a prayer for pardon,
Pried with a plea for grace.
But like an iron sentry
Love took his sleepless stand
There at the only entry
With a broken heart in his hand.

"In to Remorse's Garden
Think not to steal," he cried.
"What! Would ye foil the Warden—
Me—of Remorse's bride?
Leave her to weep. I sent her
One whom she spurned with pain,
One whom she now bids enter,
One whom she bids in vain!"

And the maid still sits in the Garden
Out of the glad sun's range,
Sighing that souls should harden,
Weeping that hearts should change!

THE BELLE OF THE BRIDES.

As I watch you glittering there,
A laughing, bespangled Grace,
A rustling human Snare,
A Siren in silk and lace,
How fain would I find a trace
Of penitence, shame, or care
In your beautiful, chiselled face—
As I watch you glittering there!

You are all that is dear and base!
You are all that is vile and fair!
Once—in another place—
I gave you my ring to wear.
Now with a proud despair
I look on your chiselled face
And the coronet in your hair!—
You are all that is dear and base!

“WHAT EVERY WOMAN KNOWS!”

I simply worship Caroline.

And yet upon my soul I cannot
The secret of her charm define—
The task would make a cool brain-pan hot!

For Caroline is Caroline.

And that about sums up the matter.
The essence of her whole design
Defies a Theorist to come at her.

And yet my sister would assign
One shrewd guess as to why, precisely,
“I simply worship Caroline”—
Because she flatters me so nicely!

BÄLU.

Who is Balu? What is he?

Balu is a shaggy shock.

Balu is a mystery.

Balu is a stumbling-block.

Balu is a "dear." He gets

More than Balu understands.

Balu is a pet of pets—

Petted by a hand of hands!

Now you know who Balu is,

Barking Balu, all agog

For the favours that are his,

And his only—lucky dog!

Who but Balu knows the bliss

Of Her praises? Who but he

Feels Her clasp, caress, and kiss?

Balu, mankind envies thee!

TO A BALL-ROOM BELLE.

(After a discussion of A. C. S.).

The Burden of sweet Swinburne. End of days,
And end of dreams, and end of smiles that
sing,
And end of laughing eyes, and end of praise,
And end of bliss, and end of everything.
Finality complete, unpitying
That makes all things and makes our dance
expire,
Yea, docks our dance, and leaves me mur-
muring,
"This is the end of every man's desire!"

TO THE SAME—AND HER SISTERS.

When first I gazed on Sophay,
My heart went pit-a-pat.
(My heart has grown quite *au fait*
At doing things like that!)
But Sophay was another's
And so, rebuffs to bar,
I took the hint—her mother's—
To worship from afar!
Then Lulu swept upon me—
Miss Twinkle-Eyes demure!
Grey eyes that coyly con me!
Red lips that laugh and lure!

Say, Memory, who on Lulu
 Could look without a sigh,
Could look, and still keep cool—who?
 I didn't even try!

For Lulu's sake to languish
 I was resigned when—ah!—
A charming change of anguish—
 I met Veronica,
Veronica the queenly,
 Veronica designed
Most sweetly and serenely
 To devastate mankind!

She *was* nice!—So was Mabel
 Who flashed upon my sight
A Meteor through the sable
 Gloom of an August night,
A brief glimpse, but sufficing
 To make me feel the thrill
Of artlessness enticing
 And pouts that ravish still!

O Queens of all the Graces
 By right of all the Charms,
By right of Forms and Faces,
 By right of Necks and Arms—
As panting fish the waters,
 As parching frog the dyke,
I love your mother's daughters,
 And love them all alike!

THE SHATTERING OF IDOLS.*

In the days of early childhood,
When the sad hour comes at last
That the brownies, gnomes, and fairies
Join the daydreams of the past,
When we learn that elves and goblins
Are but empty fantasies—
O Shattering of Idols!
How pitiful it is!

In the days of early boyhood,
When the fancy thirsts for blood,
And the bosom heaves with rapture
At each bullet's "sickly thud,"
When we find Sir Henry Curtis
Was but born of Haggard's art—
O Shattering of Idols!
How doth it rend the heart!

In the days of early manhood,
When the spring of love beguiles,
And we first bow down in homage
To the first coy Queen of Smiles,
When she our heart called goddess
Proves human as the rest—
O shattering of Idols!
How chill it leaves the breast!

* Reprinted from *Pearson's Magazine*.

THE MAN IN THE EIGHT.*

When the Blues recline in "The Club's" best
chairs,

And yawn in lethargic state,
Or languidly settle the world's affairs—
Look out for the Man in the Eight!
Did sovereign ever look more sublime,
Or premier more sedate
Than he in whose honour I write this rhyme—
The magnificent Man in the Eight?

When the Freshmen troop to the water's edge
With a sigh for the "tubbed" one's fate,
And flounder about 'midst the reeds and sedge—
Look out for the Man in the Eight!
How cutting his counsels at each mishap!
How pithy his speech and straight!
Rare sarcasm lurks 'neath the cross-oared cap
Of the merciless Man in the Eight!

When the champagne flows, and the speeches fly,
And the roystering night grows late,
And the Bump Supper melodies float on high—
Look out for the Man in the Eight!
When the old hall rings with the stamp of feet,
And the Founder beams in state,
As he lists from the wall to the cake-walk's
beat—
Do look at the Man in the Eight!

* Reprinted from *Black and White*.

When the Bishops, Justices, grave K.C.'s,
And Head-Masters congregate
With the D.S.O.'s and the sage M.P.'s—
Look out for the Man in the Eight!
While ripples the Cam, while Isis flows,
And the old fire glows innate,
You may read Grit's Triumph from start to close
On the brow of the Man in the Eight!

“AU REVOIR!” *

By a Wayfarer.

Good luck to this Inn!
Grow its roses diviner!
I was feeling *so* thin.
Good luck to this Inn!
It has lined me within
Till I never felt finer!
Good luck to this Inn!
Grow its roses diviner!

* Reprinted from *Country Life*.

THE CROCODILE.*

Hullo!

There they go!

Marching two by two!

Trim, neat,

Slim, sweet,

Quite a "taking" crew!

Glossy locks,

Dainty frocks,

Hats in latest style!

Most demurely

Chatting—surely

A model Crocodile!

Yum! Yum!

Here they come.

Crocodile beware.

Juvenile

Looks of guile

Wait you over there.

Gay young sparks,

Bent on "larks,"

Lurk round yonder bend.

Well, I wot, knows

Satan what those

Mutual winks portend!

* Reprinted from *The Royal Magazine*.

Now they're nigh.

Oh fie!

Watch those bad young men

Hesitate,

Halt, debate

Every now and then.

Now with eyes

On the skies,

See, the road they're crossing.

Now each maiden

Her curl-laden

Head is fiercely tossing!

Ah, Shame,

Thy flame

Shuns the youthful brow.

Each hat

Greets, pat,

Sylphs ne'er seen till now.

Madame stares.

Madame glares.

Madame scowls—then vainly

To her charges

From afar ges-

ticulates inanely!

Now, Muse,
Infuse
 Might into my pen.
Narrate
How Fate
 Plagued poor Madame then.
For, alas!
It was
 Really most unfortunate
That just *then* two
Beggar-men flew
 Up with claims importunate!

While she
Helplessly
 Tries these pests to rout,
In the van
Each young man
 Picks his fancy out.
Here, there,
And everywhere
 Flame the crimson faces
Of the wriggling
Mass of giggling
 Girls in fond embraces!

Suddenly
Saunters by
 A guardian of the peace.
Madame shrieks
In high-pitched squeaks,
 "Police! Police! Police!"
Robert hies
Towards her cries.
 Each decorum-scorner
Without mishap
Gaily disappears
 around the corner!

A SILVERY LAUGH.*

A silvery laugh along the telephone
 Rang in my ears one day from Devonshire,
 From Devonshire to London, where for hire
I pen myself as in a vault of stone.

It rang for me, it rang for me alone,
Re-echoing sweetlier than a fairies' choir,
 A silvery laugh!

Its music streamed upon me like a loan
 Of grateful rain amidst Sahara's fire.
She I most worship, she I most desire
Sent me, for weeks of silence to atone,
 A silvery laugh!

* Reprinted from *Country Life*.

POLITICS.*

A dear little creature of bashful fifteen
Is the theme of this trivial story,
As true-blue a damsel as ever was seen—
A regular hot-headed Tory!

But at blushing eighteen came a gallant young
squire,
Who was charmed with her smile—and he
kissed her!
Then her politics veered like the cock on a spire,
And she changed to a Passive Resister.

They embarked a year later with ecstasied
thrills
On their honeymoon's dizzying motions.
But her husband declared, when he'd paid all
the bills,
That he thought she had Liberal Notions.

Their honeymoon over, they settled in town.
Lack-a-day! But a woman's mind strange is!
He found that the mere name of "clubs" made
her frown,
And talk about Radical Changes

And to-day her poor husband looks sad and
subdued,
And methinks the old passion's grown cooler.
For I shrewdly suspect—with no wish to be
rude—
He's found her a rabid Home Ruler!

* Reprinted from *Scraps*.

AN ECHO OF THE WORLD *

Thirteen love Thirty? Dearly!
Thirty brings sweets and toys.
Thirteen loves grown-up Thirty
Better than hare-brained boys.
Thirty adores Miss Thirteen,
Honours her slightest whim.
Never was pearl to diver
Dearer than she to him!
Thirteen has grown to Eighteen,
Thirty to Thirty-Five.
Thirteen's a haughty heiress—
Peers for her favour strive.
Wed her old playmate? Never!
Pity the hope-tricked mind!
Pity the heart so steadfast
Mocked by a love so blind!

* * * *

There's a castle in bonnie Scotland
By the banks of the winding Tay,
Where a Duchess of queenly beauty
Sits and watches the deer at play.
There's a room at the back of this castle
Full of valueless odds and ends,
Where Her Grace keeps a dust-grimed photo
Of one of her childhood's friends.

* Reprinted from *The Idler*.

There's a cabin in Colorado
By the side of a mountain-stream,
Where crusty old " Hermit Peter "
Loves to sit by the fire and dream.
In a niche on the right of the fire-place,
Secure in its secret lair,
Lies the costliest gem in the Rockies—
The lock of a Duchess' hair!

THE THINGS I MIGHT HAVE SAID.*

They haunt me aye,
By night, by day,
From morn till dewy eve.
They din my ear
With echoes drear,
That grant me no reprieve.
Their grim shapes rise
Before mine eyes
Alike in bath and bed.
They rob my breast
Of all its rest—
Those things I might have said!

* Reprinted from *The Grand Magazine*

The apt reply
The timely lie,
 The plausible excuse,
The cutting jest,
The sally drest
 In eloquent abuse—
Now one and all
Without my call
 Flit madly through my brain,
Months, months too late
For chance or fate
 To stage the scenes again.

Why *should* it be,
When Maud twits me,
 That I but stand and stare,
And rack my mind
In vain to find
 The quip that isn't there?
My sole retorts
Are fiery snorts,
 That merely swell her glee.
Yet when she's fled,
My timber-head
 Just teems with repartee!

Time moves too fast.
My wit's out-classed.
It cannot last the pace.
My bat-like eye
Cannot descry
What stares me in the face.
Wherefore, the more
I ponder o'er
The moments that have sped,
The more I wail
Without avail
The things I might have said!

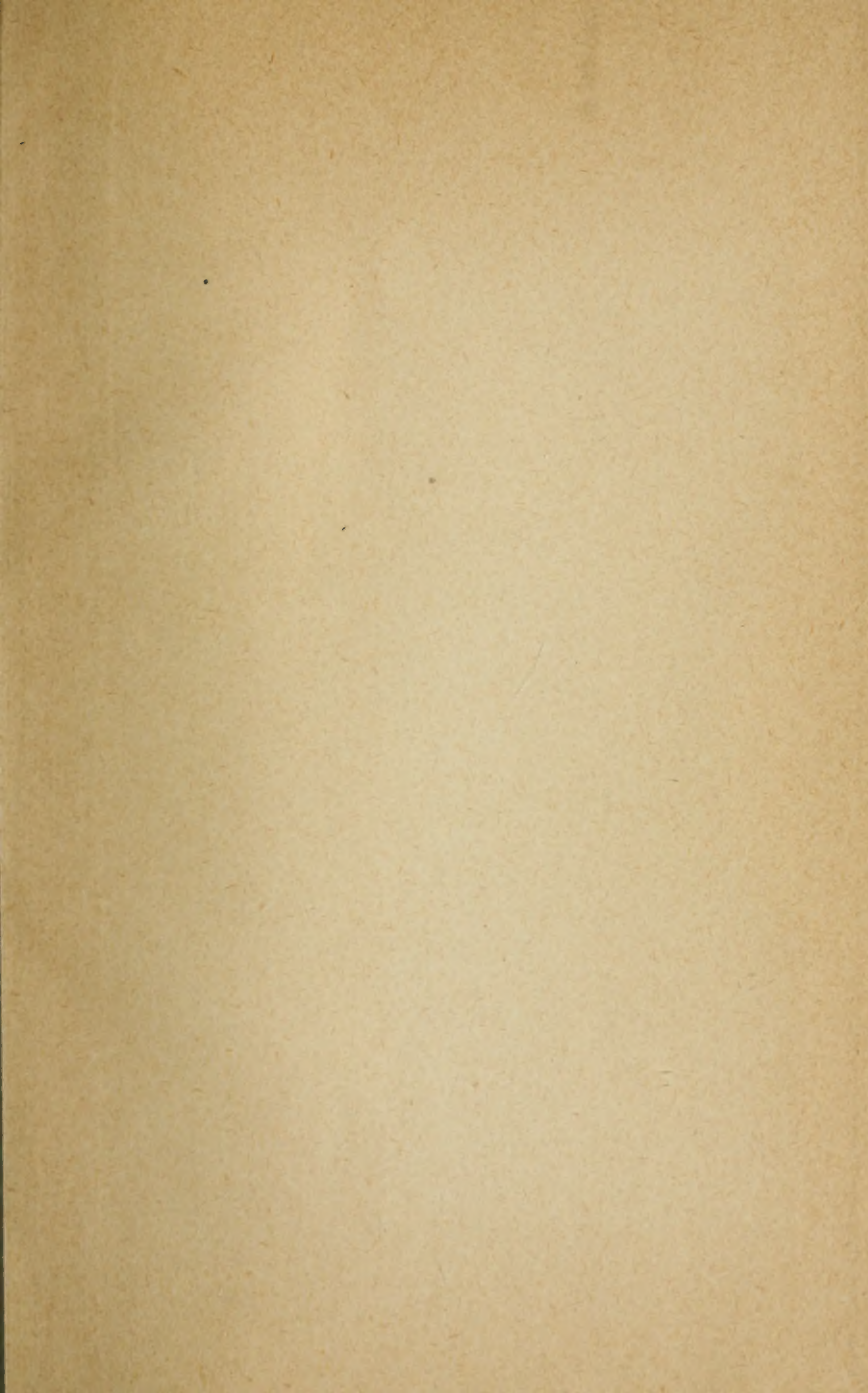


L'ENVOY.

If it were in my power to choose
One wish that Fate would not refuse—
 I'd wish that on some summer's day,
 A thousand years hereafter, say,
Some hammock-haunter, queenly fair,
With arching brows, and wavy hair,
 And pure sweet eyes, that danced at will,
 And heart to match, but purer still,
Should read some trivial verse of mine,
And with a rippling laugh divine
 Look up, and say—my shade should
 hear—
“ The man who wrote that was a dear ! ”

The End.





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Morrison, E.W.

The lays of a lyrical lounge.

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